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Addendum

Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit

I. Introduction

1. In 2000, UNDP contributed to the preparation of several reports of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) through its direct inputs as well as through its inputs and comments via the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). The reports included: (a) Administration of justice at the United Nations (JIU/REP/2000/1); (b) The use of consultants in the United Nations (JIU/REP/2000/2); (c) Senior-level appointments in the United Nations, its programmes and funds (JIU/REP/2000/3); (d) Review of management and administration in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (JIU/REP/2000/4); (e) United Nations system common services at Geneva (JIU/REP/2000/5); (f) Delegation of authority for the management of human and financial resources in the United Nations Secretariat (JIU/REP/2000/6); (g) Young professionals in selected organizations of the United Nations system recruitment, management and retention (JIU/REP/2000/7).

2. The present report summarizes the general scope of the JIU reports and highlights recommendations of particular relevance to UNDP, noting the comments made by UNDP to the final reports and indicating any particular points for consideration or action by the Executive Board.

II. Individual reports

A. Administration of justice at the United Nations (JIU/REP/2000/1)

Scope

3. The objective of the report is to review the United Nations administration of justice machinery from its legal foundation (Charter of the United Nations, staff regulations and rules, administrative instructions, procedures) to its functioning and impact, including the various bodies dealing with the administration of justice. The review is aimed at helping to clarify the current system for the administration of justice and providing concrete recommendations to adjust it to the new management requirements. It also serves as a solid basis for accountability and oversight in the United Nations by making administration-of-justice tools clear and transparent.

Recommendations of interest to UNDP

4. The recommendations contained in the report call for, inter alia: (a) the creation of an office for the settlement of disputes and administration of justice to increase the independence of the system of administration of justice; (b) the creation of an ombudsman function to strengthen the system's

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capability for informal conciliation, mediation and negotiation; (c) the review of the Statute of the Administrative Tribunal to eliminate present restrictions on the Tribunal's authority; (d) the creation of a committee for professional responsibility; (e) the establishment of higher appeal instances; and (f) proper legal advice and representation for staff members.

Comments by UNDP

5. While UNDP, together with UNFPA and UNOPS, has its own Disciplinary Committee, it relies on the United Nations Joint Appeals Board and the United Nations Administrative Tribunal for the disposition of appeals cases. The recommendations with regard to the United Nations Secretariat are therefore of great interest to UNDP since any change in the statutory bodies of the United Nations, as well as changes in its administrative structure, would be expected to have an impact on the administration of justice in UNDP. The proposed changes are also of immediate interest to UNDP in that it is currently in the process of reviewing the elements of the justice system that are internal to UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS with a view to improving the efficiency, fairness and transparency of the system.

B. The use of consultants in the United Nations (JIU/REP/2000/2)

Scope

6. The main objective of the report is to ensure the effective implementation of policy directives established by the General Assembly on the use of consultants by the organization by reinforcing the recently established framework for the elimination of irregularities and for better compliance with existing rules and regulations on the use of consultants (recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), the Board of Auditors and the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), and measures proposed by the Secretary-General).

Recommendations of interest to UNDP

7. Among the key recommendations of the report are that: (a) the Secretary-General should instruct that (i) the development of the skills inventory of the staff should be expedited; (ii) an electronic information system covering all the substantive programmes of the United Nations be developed; (iii) in the interim, the Office of Human Resources Management should review all consultancy requests to ascertain if the required expertise is available "in-house"; (b) ACABQ and the CPC should be invited to include in their reports on the programme budget, detailed comments and assessment of the situation with regard to the level of resources for consultants; (c) the Secretary-General should establish clear operational procedures on how the travel expenses of consultants should be handled in order that they do not distort geographical balance; (d) the Secretary-General should study different methodologies which might be used to achieve geographical balance in the use of consultants; (e) the Secretary-General should ensure that information on planned requirements for consultancy services is made available in a timely manner to the Permanent Missions of Member States; (f) annual report of the Secretary-General on consultants hired in the preceding year should be expanded; and (g) the General Assembly should review and evaluate all aspects of policy and practice in respect of the use of consultants.

Comments by UNDP

8. In a search for best practice that might be applied by the United Nations, UNDP shared with the JIU inspectors policies and practices in force in the organization and is ready to continue this sharing of expertise and ideas. The experience on harmonization and simplification on administrative procedures among organizations members of the United Nations Development Group should be actively pursued. UNDP would certainly consider with interest any reforms in this area in the United Nations Secretariat and be guided by them to the extent that they would have relevance within UNDP.

C. Senior-level appointments in the United Nations, its programmes and funds (JIU/REP/2000/3)

Scope

9. The objective of the report was to propose measures with a view to ensuring improvement in: (a) selection of the best qualified candidates; (b) transparency of recruitment; (c) geographical distribution of senior-level posts; and (d) streamlining of relevant policies and procedures.

Recommendations of interest to UNDP

10. The JIU report recommends that the General Assembly call upon the executive heads of the United Nations programmes and funds to give greater importance to ensuring recruitment of staff at senior levels on as wide a geographical basis as possible. The report recalls that the Secretary-General pointed out that the principles governing the recruitment of staff, which are derived from Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, apply to all the staff of the secretariats of its subsidiary programmes, funds and organs with special status in matters of appointment.

Comments by UNDP

11. UNDP has contributed actively to the work of the JIU inspectors but owing to technical problems, the comments of UNDP on the draft report have not been included in the final text of the report. These comments are the following:

(a) *Paragraph 86, page 12.*

(i) It must be understood that with regard to promotion to the D-2 level, an annual review is undertaken by the top management of UNDP, which makes recommendations to the Administrator on promotion to this level;

(ii) The steps to be taken in filling a Resident Representative/Resident Coordinator position are as follows:

The Resident Coordinator post is advertised to all ACC members and nominations from sponsoring organizations submitted to the United Nations Development Group Office (UNDGO);

An Inter-Agency Panel, chaired by UNDGO, reviews the candidate submitted by sponsoring organizations against the requirements of the post(s);

The Inter-Agency Advisory Panel makes recommendations to the Administrator of UNDP in his capacity as the funder and manager of the resident coordinator system;

The Administrator makes proposals to the Secretary-General, through the Executive Committee of UNDG, the broader UNDG and DPA.

ACC is also consulted. Once the candidate is cleared, details are forwarded to the Host Government for acceptance. Candidates are assessed on the basis of experience, performance history and the results of the independent competency assessment of candidates;

(b) *Paragraph 97, page 13.* The text does not reflect that, as part of the selection process, UNDG has introduced a new competency assessment system for Resident Coordinator posts. This system requires that all candidates be submitted for independent assessment by an independent firm against a set of competencies required for the post. More than 100 staff members from different members of UNDG have been through this process.

D. Review of management and administration in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (JIU/REP/2000/4)

Scope

12. The objective of the report is to contribute to the current reform initiatives undertaken by UNESCO, aimed at establishing improved administration and management practices.

Recommendations of interest to UNDP

13. The JIU report on UNESCO devoted three important paragraphs under the section entitled "cooperating more closely with other United Nations system organizations" that underline the invitation addressed by the Executive Board to the Director-General of UNESCO to look for opportunities to realize a more unified, effective, and efficient presence at the field level by closer integration of field representation with other United Nations organizations while taking into account the specificity of the UNESCO mandate and activities. The participation of UNESCO in the common country assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and thematic groups is active even though participation is sometimes time-consuming, especially for smaller UNESCO offices. The JIU recalled its report on common premises and services (JIU/REP/94/8) and encouraged all United Nations organizations to accelerate and intensify their efforts to establish and/or enhance common premises and services.

Comments by UNDP

14. UNDP, as funder and manager of the resident coordinator system and as a member of UNDG as well as of the ACC machinery, is committed to strengthening the dialogue with UNESCO as well as with any other partner organization on the ways and methods to promote such a collaborative effort at the country level while ensuring that the specificity of mandate and activities of each organization is fully promoted.

E. United Nations system common services at Geneva: case studies (JIU/REP/2000/5)

Scope

15. The objective of this volume of case studies was to identify key strengths and constraints of some existing common services in order to derive lessons that can be applied to the expanded sharing of support services in accordance with the plan of action for Geneva common services: 2000-2010, recommended in part I of the report subtitled "Overview of administrative cooperation and coordination" (JIU/REP/98/4).

Recommendations of interest to UNDP

16. There is no direct recommendation addressed to UNDP/Geneva in the report.

Comments from UNDP

17. The report is an interesting input to the theme of common premises and services in the context of the resident coordinator system and is serving as a background working document in the framework of the UNDG as well as in ACC machinery.

F. Delegation of authority for the management of human and financial resources in the United Nations Secretariat (JIU/REP/2000/6)

Scope

18. The objective of the report is to assess progress in the implementation of delegation of authority for the management of human and financial resources in the United Nations Secretariat and to develop criteria to be applied in the future, in particular with regard to the establishment of a framework of accountability. The major recommendations of the report are the following: (a) the Secretary-General should present to the General Assembly a comprehensive overall plan of action for delegation of authority based on a systematically developed concept rather than an ad hoc approach; (b) the Secretary-General should take steps to ensure strict compliance with the procedures for the promulgation of administrative issuances; (c) the Secretariat should promulgate one comprehensive administrative instruction on the delegation of authority for the administration of Staff Regulations and Rules; (d) the Secretary-General should be requested as a matter of urgency to promulgate a revised version of the Financial Regulations and Rules so as to incorporate pertinent revisions to the Regulations approved by the General Assembly and to update the Rules as may be required; (e) the Secretary-General should be encouraged to take additional steps towards the establishment of a culture of clarity, transparency and communication; (f) the Secretary-General should institute the requirements that the delegation of authority to individuals should be clearly defined in individual delegation orders; (g) managers to whom authority is to be delegated should be provided with specialized training and briefings, and with adequate support services under their direct supervision or through "common" services; (h) the Secretary-General should undertake all efforts to optimize the functioning of the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) and the Intranet both at Headquarters and in the field so as to ensure constant and immediate access by managers to relevant information; (i) the Secretary-General should ensure that the central administrative units retain an ongoing monitoring capacity by developing adequate information technologies and systems; (j) the Secretary-General's efforts to develop a comprehensive system of measuring performance as well as a system of accountability should be based on the principles set out in the report; and (k) the Secretary-General should ensure that staff's views and suggestions should be considered to the greatest extent possible.

Recommendations of interest to UNDP

19. While there is no particular recommendation of direct relevance to UNDP, senior management

considers the report very instructive and will use it as a working reference.

Comments by UNDP

20. UNDP has been fully involved in the preparation of this JIU report, providing information as well as exchanging information with the JIU inspectors. UNDP is mentioned several times in the report. In the course of the review, it was apparent to UNDP that the issue of delegation of authority was probably at very different stages in the various organizations and that in the case of UNDP, with a mature field network of offices and a highly evolved degree of delegation of authority, the issues would not be the same as those faced by the Secretariat and some other organizations. Nevertheless, the exchange of experience has been useful and UNDP looks forward to learning how others will proceed to expand their delegation of authority.

G. Young professionals in selected organizations of the United Nations system: recruitment, management and retention (JIU/REP/2000/7)

Scope

21. The major objective of the report is to compare and analyse policies and practices in selected organizations of the system with regard to the recruitment and management of entry-level professionals, with a view to making recommendations as to ways to prepare and retain a cadre of dedicated and competent professionals for these organizations. The major recommendations of the report are the following: (a) secretariats should undertake efforts to reduce the age at recruitment for all Professional posts, and for P-1 to P-3 posts in particular; (b) trends on separations of professional staff in the United Nations system should be more carefully monitored through statistics on separations and exit questionnaires; (c) secretariats of all concerned organizations should speed up recruitment processes by imposing strict deadlines for action; (d) further efforts should be undertaken by the Secretariat to accelerate the placement of candidates who are successful in national competitive recruitment examinations and to reduce the number of candidates presently on the roster; (e) the General Assembly may wish to call on Member States to cooperate more effectively with the organization of the examination and, in particular, to its publicity; (f) secretariats that have no done so, should set up structures to assist with the successful integration of young professionals during their first months; (g) secretariats should offer the opportunity to junior professional staff members to pursue studies and research in fields of relevance to their work; (h) secretariats should increase opportunities for young professionals to be assigned both at Headquarters and in the field in the course of their first five or six years; (i) managers in concerned organizations should devote sufficient time and attention to the development of their junior staff; (j) secretariats should make more efforts to facilitate spouse employment by setting up joint family-career transition programmes, by rescinding restriction on spouse employment by amending relevant staff regulations and by encouraging the General Assembly to call to Governments in host countries to consider granting work permits for spouses accompanying staff members.

Recommendations of interest to UNDP

22. UNDP is one of the organizations concerned by the JIU report and all the recommendations expressed in the report are considered as interesting and as valuable working references for further development of policies and procedures to attract and keep young candidates for professional positions.

Comments by UNDP

23. Owing to technical problems, it was too late to reflect the latest information provided by UNDP in the report. The present report gives UNDP the opportunity to update the information on UNDP (provided in paragraph 31 of the report) as it has just launched, at the end of 2000, the Leadership Development Programme (LEAD). The LEAD was launched as a successor programme to the Management Training Programme (MTP). The design of the LEAD programme reflects the current organizational culture and needs while incorporating best practices and lessons learned from the MTP. The LEAD programme will be open to junior professional officers, national officers and other UNDP staff, as well as external candidates. Selection will be competency-based as measured through a variety of assessment techniques, including a remote competency assessment and behaviour-based interviews. The LEAD provides more systematic development support after recruitment.

There is headquarters training followed by a 2-3 months special assignment for additional exposure to UNDP work. A second headquarters training will consolidate the learning during the special assignment and strengthen critical work-related skills. After the second training, individuals will enter their duty stations to assume their 2-3 year assignment. The 2-3 year assignment will be hand-picked in advance to ensure an enabling environment for performance and development of LEAD participants. A mentoring scheme will provide further support to the individuals. Second, there is a comprehensive use of competencies, starting from the competency assessment for selection to training, annual performance reviews, annual learning plans and a final competency assessment during the programme, which lasts for a maximum of five years. Third, there is a clear "up-or-out" approach. Those who are successful in the final assessment will enter the corporate reassignment exercise to assume Deputy Resident Representative, policy advisor or other management responsibilities in the organization. Those who are not successful will have to pursue opportunities outside UNDP. The annual intake is expected to be 20, but this will correspond to workforce planning. Paragraph 34 of the JIU report suggests that there were unrealistic expectations among young professionals that caused delays and difficulties in connection with the placements of MTP in 1996. However, the main reason for delays in placement was a dearth of suitable vacancies caused by budget constraints at that time. UNDP strongly supports the recommendation regarding spouse employment. Paragraph 18 cites a paper drafted in 1999 by certain young UNDP staff stating that every year UNDP loses "a large number of highly qualified and motivated young professionals". This paper was referring in large part to young professionals holding contracts for activities of limited duration, where turnover is expected. A review of recent separations of regular UNDP career staff does not reflect that a large number of young professionals are leaving UNDP. Therefore, the statement in the text of the paragraph is misleading. Beyond these specific remarks, UNDP shares the recommendations of the JIU and, where they have direct relevance to UNDP, will use them as a guide to future actions.

III. Executive Board action

24. The Executive Board may wish to take note of the present report, particularly those aspects of the JIU reports highlighted that have particular relevance to the work of UNDP.